

Chapter 3. Who is infected but does not yet know it?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that about one-third of HIV infected persons nationwide either do not know they are infected or are not in care¹. People unaware of their status do not access HIV-related care and treatment and therefore are unable to experience the benefits of these services including improved health, better quality of life and longer survival. Additionally, they are not able to receive support regarding the further prevention of HIV transmission. Applying this national estimate to the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Massachusetts reported to the HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program (N=13,624) would yield an estimated 7,018 people who are infected with HIV and do not know it and/or are not in care. Therefore, the estimated total number of people currently living with HIV/AIDS in MA, including people known to the system as well as those yet to be identified, could be in the range of 20,000 – 21,000 people.

The profile of people who are diagnosed with HIV and AIDS simultaneously (co-diagnosed) highlights a population that may have first learned about their HIV status late in the progression of HIV disease. It is likely that people who are co-diagnosed with HIV and AIDS have been infected for more time prior to learning their HIV status than people who learn their status earlier in the course of disease. As such, the profile of people who are co-diagnosed provides a good approximation of the profile of people who are infected but do not know it. This group is one of the target populations for HIV Counseling and Testing efforts.

In the analyses that follow, a person is considered to have been co-diagnosed with HIV infection and AIDS if both the initial HIV infection and AIDS diagnosis occurred within a two month period.

¹ Fleming PL, Byers RH, Sweeney PA, Daniels D, Karon JM, Janssen RS. HIV prevalence in the United States, 2000. Abstract 11. 9th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections, Seattle, Washington, February 24-28, 2002

Section 1. Profile of People Co-Diagnosed with HIV and AIDS

Table 3.1 People Co-diagnosed with HIV Infection and AIDS¹ and People Diagnosed with HIV Infection Only (non-AIDS) by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Mode of Exposure: MA, 1999 – 2001

	Co – Diagnosed with HIV and AIDS		HIV Infection (no AIDS Diagnosis)	
By Gender:	N	%	N	%
Male	677	73%	1,207	68%
Female	250	27%	577	32%
By Race/Ethnicity:	N	%	N	%
White (non-Hispanic)	393	42%	721	40%
Black (non-Hispanic)	299	32%	565	32%
Hispanic/Latino	208	22%	436	24%
Asian / Pacific Islander	25	3%	34	2%
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	2	<1%	6	<1%
Not Specified	0	0%	22	1%
By Exposure Mode ¹ :	N	%	N	%
Male-to-male sex (MSM)	242	26%	586	33%
Injection Drug Use (IDU)	187	20%	410	23%
MSM/IDU	10	1%	38	2%
Heterosexual Sex	147	16%	249	14%
Pres. Heterosexual Sex	274	30%	361	20%
Blood/Blood products	7	1%	5	<1%
Pediatric	3	<1%	-	-
No Identified Risk	57	6%	132	8%
TOTAL	927		1,784	
¹ Co-diagnosed = diagnosed with HIV infection and AIDS within 2 months Data Source: MDPH HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program (percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding), Data as of 7/1/02				

- From 1999 to 2001, 927 people were diagnosed with HIV infection and AIDS at the same time, representing 29% of all 1999-2001 HIV diagnoses.
- Presumed heterosexual sex accounts for the largest percentage (30%) of exposures among people who were co-diagnosed, while male-to-male sex accounts for the largest percentage (33%) among those diagnosed with HIV only.

Note: the category of presumed heterosexual is created to re-assign people who are reported with no identified risk but who are known to have denied all other risks except the possibility of heterosexual sex with a partner of unknown HIV status or risk. As such, it is still not clear what the exposure risk is for people in this category and any comparisons should be interpreted with caution.

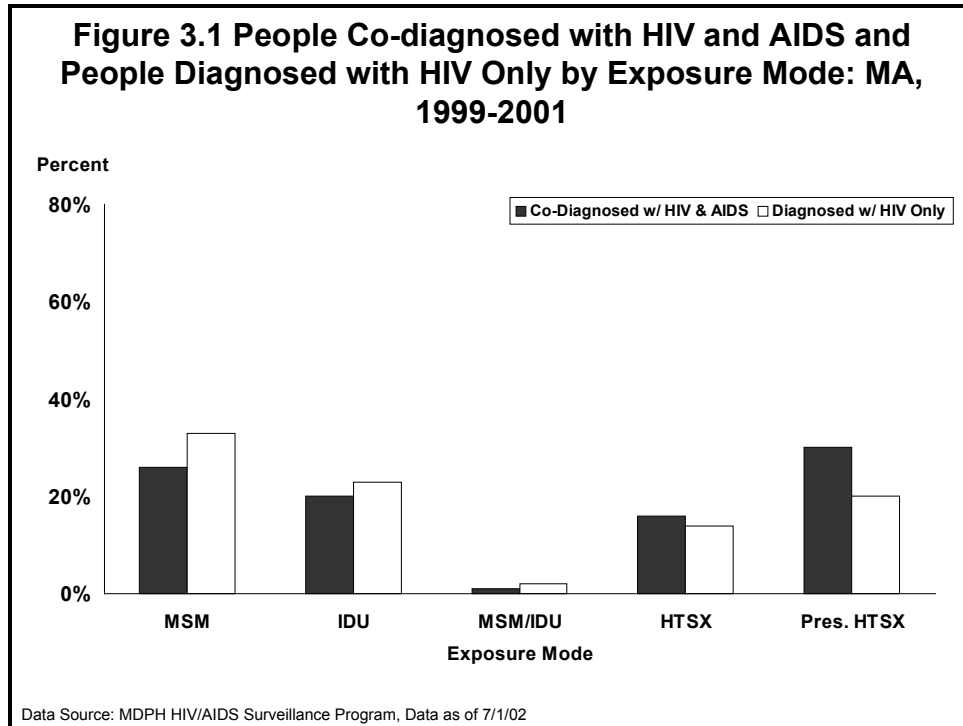
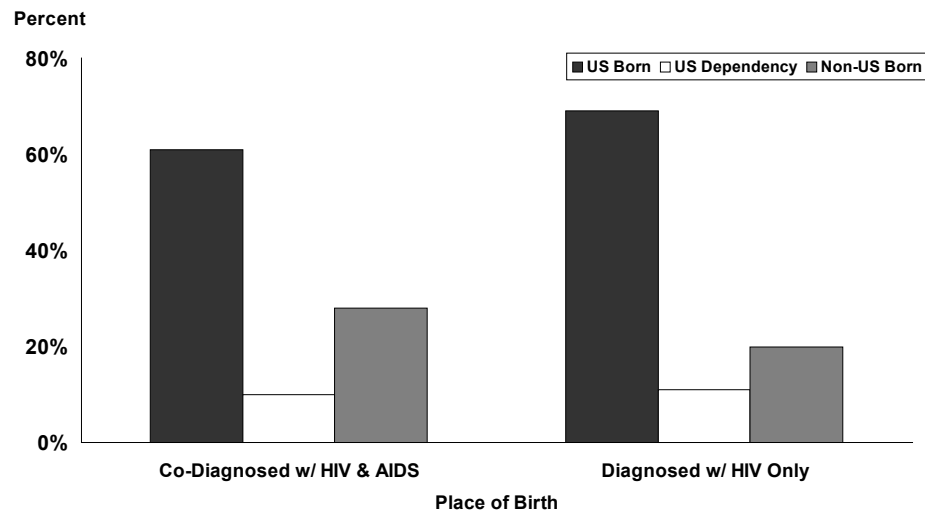


Table 3.2 People Co-diagnosed with HIV Infection and AIDS¹ and People Diagnosed with HIV Infection Only (non-AIDS) by Place of Birth and Age at HIV/AIDS Co-Diagnosis and HIV Diagnosis: MA, 1999-2001

	Co – Diagnosed with HIV and AIDS		HIV Infection (no AIDS Diagnosis)	
By Place of Birth:	N	%	N	%
Non-US	264	28%	356	20%
US	568	61%	1230	69%
US-Dependency	95	10%	198	11%
By Age at Diagnosis:	N	%	N	%
0-12	3	<1%	-- ²	-- ²
13-19	6	1%	45	3%
20-24	26	3%	120	7%
25-29	60	6%	266	15%
30-34	182	20%	368	21%
35-39	224	24%	410	23%
40-44	189	20%	267	15%
45-49	113	12%	166	9%
50+	124	13%	142	8%
Total	927		1,784	
¹ Co-diagnosed = diagnosed with HIV infection and AIDS within 2 months ² Data on Pediatric cases of HIV are not included here, for more information contact the Pediatric Spectrum of Disease Project, MDPH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control; Data Source: MDPH HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program (percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding), Data as of 7/1/02				

- A greater proportion of people co-diagnosed with HIV and AIDS are non-US born as compared to those who were diagnosed with HIV infection only (28% vs. 20%).
- People co-diagnosed with HIV and AIDS are older than those who are diagnosed with HIV only.

Figure 3.2 People Co-diagnosed with HIV and AIDS and People Diagnosed with HIV Only by Place of Birth: MA, 1999-2001



Data Source: MDPH HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program, Data as of 7/1/02

